



## Germany: Facts & Figures February 2010

*A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany*

### Politics

If Bundestag elections would have been held on March 7th, the CDU/CSU would have received 35% of the vote, followed by the SPD (22%), the Green Party (16%), the FDP (9%), and the Left Party (11%). The remaining parties would have received a combined 7% of the overall vote. (Forsa. 03/03/10)

Germans are dissatisfied with the coalition government. Asked what grade they would give the government for its performance in the first 100 days in office, they gave the government only a 3.9 on a scale ranging from one (very good) to five (very bad). The most popular minister continues to be Defense Minister zu Guttenberg with a 69% approval rating. (ARD Tagesthemen. 02/05/10)

### Economy

The unemployment rate edged up to 8.7% in February from 8.6% in January. A total of 3.643 million people were registered as unemployed in Germany, an increase of 26,000 over the previous month. (Federal Labor Office. Major papers, 02/26/10)

Green energies in Germany provide for more than 10% of the country's energy needs. According to the federal association of renewable energy BEE, the share of green energy rose from 9.6% to 10.6% over the last year. (FAZ, 02/20/10)

German GDP shrunk a total of 5% in 2009 from 2008 levels. Economic experts are describing predictions of 1.6% GDP growth for 2010 as "unattainable." (Major papers, 02/13/10)

The annual inflation rate remained steady in January with 0.8% (December: 0.9%). Consumer prices were down 0.6% compared to December, largely due to seasonal factors, with prices of products and services from vacations to clothing falling after Christmas. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 02/11/10)

Retail sales rose 0.8% in December compared to November but were still down from a year earlier. Compared with December, sales were down 2.5%. Food, drink and tobacco retail sales for the last month of 2009 were half a percent lower compared with December 2008. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 02/03/2010)

The two-year old economic and financial crisis has not reached many people. Two-thirds of the interviewed said that they have not felt the impact of the crisis. One quarter of those interviewed said they were not strongly affected by the crisis, while only 6% said that they have been hard hit. However, the poll revealed a great difference between young and old people. Young people between ages 16 and 29 have the greatest fear of the future. Every third person expected changes in his/her personal situation because of the crisis, while 72% of the people older than 60 did feel affected by it. (Allensbach. Major papers, 02/02/10)

### Society

The Constitutional Court and the military have a higher reputation in Germany than politicians, the churches and other social institutions. Asked whom they fully trust, 61% of the interviewed chose the police, 53% the Constitutional Court, and 52% the Bundeswehr. The Protestant Church reached 33%, the Catholic Church 29% and the trade unions 26%. Among the 15 institutions listed, the Federal Labor Agency only reached 12%, and the political parties ten percent. (Die Welt, 02/18/10)

In 2008, 14% of the German population qualified as living in poverty because they earn less than 60% of the median income. (Institute for Economic Research. Major papers, 02/18/10)

Support for the social market economy is rising again. While the share of Germans who had a good opinion of the social market economy dropped between 2000 and 2008 from 51% to 31%, it has now risen to 38% again. (Allensbach. Die Welt, 02/09/10)

The most popular names for newborn boys in 2009 were: Maximilian, Alexander, Leon, Paul, Luca, Elias, Felix, Lukas/Lucas, Jonas and David. The most popular names for girls: Marie, Sophie/Sofie, Maria, Anna, Emma, Mia, Sophia/Sofia, Leonie, Lena, Johanna. (Gesellschaft für Deutsche Sprache. Die Welt, 02/09/10)

Germany reached its climate protection goals in 2008, with emissions in 2008 being 22.2% lower than 1990. (Environment Ministry. Major papers, 02/02/10)

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